

How Zotero makes me a better person*

Johannes Jonker

*Sort of...

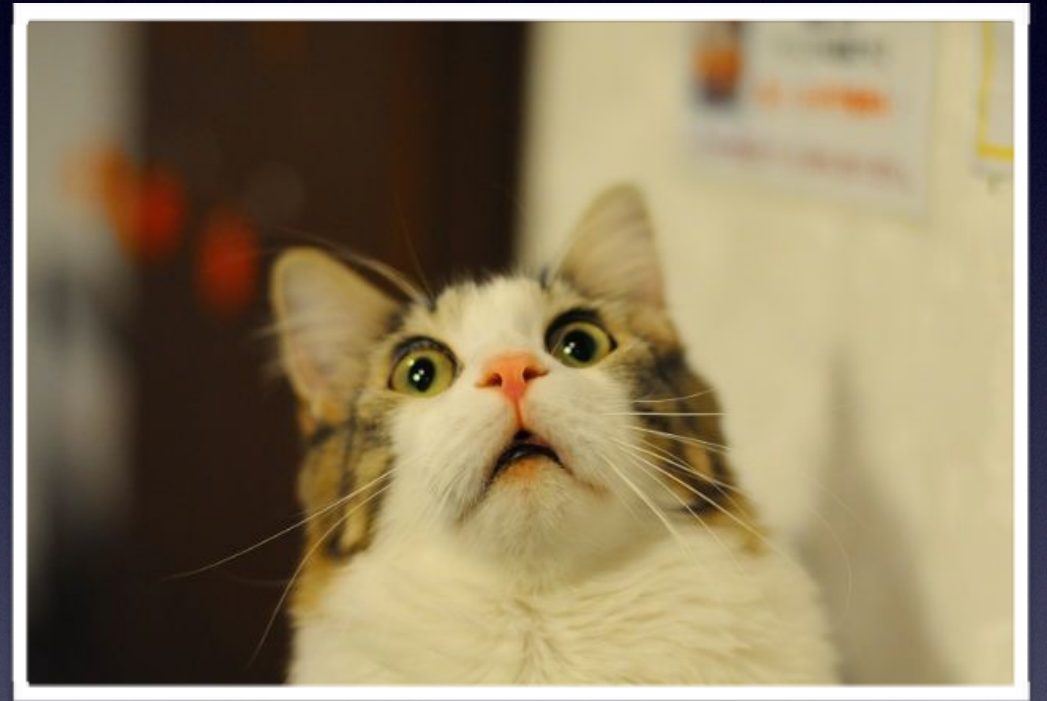


Who am I?

BA/Honours in Socio-Informatics: regular academic writing and research required. **Tech-minded:** always looking for better and simpler ways to complete tedious tasks.

My journey with Zotero

Me when I did the
(manual) referencing
for my first essay in
first year:



What I didn't like about manual referencing:

1. It was a *schlep* to find and keep track of metadata about sources.
2. It was a *schlep* to keep track of which sources I used in a document and set up a bibliography according to the right style conventions.

Three software choices at the time:

- **RefWorks:** free (👍), but web-based with a horrible interface (👎)
- **EndNote:** old-school and expensive (👎)
- **Zotero:** open source, fantastic workflow (👍)

During undergraduate years, I used Zotero for every essay/research project, writing my essays in Microsoft Word. I built up a library of references, which I could refer to and re-use when writing new essays.

The screenshot shows the Zotero web interface in a Chrome browser. The address bar displays `chrome://zotero/content/tab.xul`. The interface is divided into three main sections:

- Left Sidebar:** A tree view of the library structure. The 'My Library' folder is expanded, showing subfolders for the years 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014. Under 2014, the 'SI(H)' folder is expanded, showing subfolders like 'ERP', 'Python', 'SI-theorie', and 'Tesis'. The 'Tesis' folder is further expanded, showing subfolders like '0 Voorlopige navorsing', 'Complex system vis...', 'Kompleksiteitsteorie', 'System Dynamics', 'Moontlike soortg...', '1 Literatuurstudie', 'Experimental', 'General', 'SD research', and 'User participation ...'. The 'User participation ...' folder is selected.
- Table:** A table of references with columns: Title, Creator, Year, and Date Added. The table lists various references, with 'Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective' by Bandura (2001) selected. The table also includes a 'Date Added' column.
- Right Sidebar:** A panel showing details for the selected item. It includes tabs for 'Info', 'Notes', 'Tags', and 'Related'. The 'Info' tab is active, displaying the following information:
 - Item Type: Journal Article
 - Title: Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective
 - Author: Bandura, Albert
 - Abstract:
 - Publication: Annual review of psychology
 - Volume: 52
 - Issue: 1
 - Pages: 1-26
 - Date: 2001
 - Series:
 - Series Title:
 - Series Text:
 - Journal Abbr: Annual review of psychology
 - Language:
 - DOI:
 - ISSN: 0066-4308
 - Short Title:
 - URL:
 - Accessed:
 - Archive:
 - Loc. in Archive:
 - Library Catalog:
 - Call Number:
 - Rights:
 - Extra:
 - Date Added: 2014/06/10, 11:26:52 PM
 - Modified: 2014/06/10, 11:26:52 PM

At postgraduate level, I was expected to start working in LaTeX —> forced me to reconsider my options:

- **RefWorks:** still web-based (👎)
- **EndNote:** still expensive (👎)
- **Mendeley:** good interface + cool mobile app (👍), didn't find embedded research finder and "Import into Mendeley" bookmarklet effective (👎)
- **Zotero:** still had a fantastic workflow. Killer feature = integration with Firefox (👍)

My Zotero workflow

Collect ➤ Organise ➤ Cite

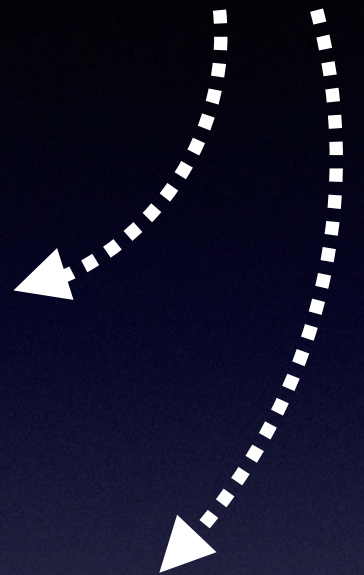


+Add own notes and annotations

Collect

Easily attach PDFs!

1. ...using “**Export citation**” links in research catalogs (incl. directly from Google Scholar search results);
2. ...from any resource using the **address bar icon**;
3. ...using “**Magic Add**” or through **metadata extraction from PDF**;
4. ...by **manually entering** metadata (😱).



Organise

- **Folders, folders, folders**
- **Tags** for content organisation, but also for status tracking
- **Stored searches**
- **Quick notes + Send to tablet**

Use

- Use in **Microsoft Word** [I don't anymore]
 - Easily set referencing format
 - Easily insert references
 - Easily generate a bibliography in the right style
- Use in **Sublime Text** or other LaTeX editor

Collect ➤ Organise ➤ Cite

A Zotero guide:

<http://johannesjonker.com/2013/08/easy-referencing-with-zotero/>

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